

District School
North Church St. between Main & First North Sts.
Fairfield
Utah County
Utah

HABS No. U-29

HABS
UTAH
25-FAIRF
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. U-29

DISTRICT SCHOOL

Location: North Church Street between Main and First North Streets, Fairfield, Utah County, Utah.
Geographic Location Code: 43- -049
Latitude: 40° 15' 43" N Longitude: 112° 5' 25" W

Present Owner: Alpine School District, 50 North Center Street, American Fork, Utah

Present Occupant: Vacant

Statement of Significance: This is one of few rural district school buildings remaining from pre-consolidation years. (pre-1915)

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and Subsequent Owners:

Hannah Gamble, 1873
Lehi School District, pre - 1915
Alpine School District, Board of Education

2. Date of erection: 1898

3. Architect and builder: Unknown

4. Alterations and additions: An addition to rear (east) of school was built in 1935. The contractor was Niels Paulsen of Pleasant Grove, Utah.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

The first school building in Fairfield was a one-room adobe building, heated by a fireplace, and situated directly in front of the present building. It was constructed in 1878, and the first teacher was either a Mr. Pim or Earl McClain. The present school was constructed at the time when this town was flourishing due to extensive agricultural and sheep raising activities on the neighboring ranch lands. It was one of the finest schools in the county, and although abandoned, the masonry workmanship is still distinctive. The school was administered loosely under the "County Superintendents of Utah County". The superintendent at the time of construction (1898) was James L. Brown. The educational program in the district at that time was largely on a community basis.

In 1915, the elementary and high schools in the Lehi, Orem, Pleasant Grove and American Fork areas were consolidated into the Alpine Consolidated School District, under the jurisdiction of one board of education and one superintendent. This consolidation occurred throughout the state in compliance with a consolidation act of the Utah Legislature of 1915. The last superintendent of the County System was John Preston Creer (1910-1916). On July 6, 1915 the new Board of Education ordered a census of students. Board minutes on the 5th of August, 1915, reported 19 boys and 13 girls in the Fairfield District School.

In 1915, the erection of a gymnasium building was commenced on the property to the north of the school. It was about half finished when the schools were consolidated and construction stopped. (The contractor then was a Mr. Talboe of Provo, Utah.) Mr. Jack McKenna of Fairfield then offered to complete the building if each family in town would pledge \$250.00 therefor. Evidently enough families made good on their pledges, for Mr McKenna was compensated for his contribution and the gymnasium was completed. It is unique in that it is one of the few gymnasias with a curved decorative sheet metal ceiling in this state.

As the population of the town fell off, the school and gymnasium received less and less use and they were closed c. 1937. Thereafter, the buildings were used primarily for community and religious purposes, but when the local Mormon Church leadership relocated to nearby Cedar Fort in 1963, both structures fell into disuse and are presently abandoned. The last school teacher of record was Fae Mathis.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Burton, Alma Pexton. One Hundred Years of Education in the Alpine School District, Ph.D. Theses, University of Utah, August 1957.

Interview with Mr. Ralph DuBois, teacher at this school 1910-1924. Lives on First North near Church Street, Fairfield, Utah. (See E. Supplemental Material.)

2. Bibliography:

Memories That Live. Emma N. Huff, Compiler.

D. Likely Sources not yet Investigated:

J. A. Carson, 269 East Second West, Lehi, Utah - Interview.

Alice Southam Cook, Cedar Fort, Utah - Interview.

E. Supplemental Material:

Interview with Mr. Ralph DuBois, who lives on First North Street in Fairfield, Utah near Church Street, and taught at the schoolhouse in Fairfield: September 6, 1967

Mr. DuBois taught school from 1910-1924.

He had 65 students, grades one through eight.

"Mr. Pim was first school teacher (in old building) in 1878. Another early teacher: Earl McClain.

Fae Mathis was the last school teacher.

Gymnasium was built in 1915 (at time of consolidation of school district Cedar Fort has a similar gymnasium built a few months before Fairfield). A Mr. Talboe of Provo built the building, but consolidation occurred about half way through construction and work was stopped. Mr. Jack McKenna offered to complete the job if the families in Fairfield would each pledge \$250.00 to finish the building. Evidently they did, and he underwrote the expense until they paid their pledges. Mr. DuBois stated he had \$250.00 equity in 'that building'.

Contractor of school building unknown.

School has not been used since LDS Church left town in 1963. (Services were held in school and gymnasium buildings).

Addition to school was built c. 1935 by Niels Paulsen of Pleasant Grove.

Address of church approximately 59 North Church Street, between Main Street and First North. (Carson Inn is on Main Street.)

Prominent graduate: Harry Cook, of Cook Realty, Salt Lake City, graduated 1910.

One of first college graduates in territory, a Mr. Phillipi, taught here - came from Nebo, (Alberta) c. 1900.

Old school was built in front of present school. Was adobe, one room, used for school and church, built by the townspeople.

Mr. Will Thomas, a resident at the time of Camp Floyd days, now deceased, told Mr. DuBois that before school was built, townspeople were taught by more learned neighbors from the columns of the Deseret News. (Mr. Thomas was later an Alpine School District Board member, 1919-22).

A. Mrs. Florence Christiansen taught here before going to Europe to study art.

Mr. DuBois never knew it as the Hannah Gamble School, although he knew the property used to belong to someone named "Gamble".

Mr. Pim, first school teacher, was so identified by Mr. William C. Thomas who knew him, although the Carson family credits Mr. Earl McClain with that distinction.

Prepared by John L. Giusti, AIA
September 5, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural interest: This is a handsome rural school notable for its brickwork. Built in 1898.
2. Condition of fabric: Vandals have broken every window and the roof is in poor repair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: A one-story rectangle, 46'5" x 45'8", with the front side stepped out at the tower. The more recent 18' x 16'1" addition forms the stem of a "T".
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Buff brick with colored mortar joints matching the dark salmon brick used for trim. Brick is laid in running bond. The lowest four courses project to create a water table at floor level. Just under the eaves is a projecting course of dark brick; the course below alternates projecting dark headers and headers in the color and

plane of the wall below, creating a dentil of brickwork.

4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls, wood framed roof and floor.
5. Porches and stoops: An arched recess at the base of the tower shelters the front entrance. The arch is formed of three radial soldier courses of dark brick and two projecting header courses of light brick. The dark brick has a rock face and forms a slightly battered wall from the spring line of the arch to the base of the tower. Just above the arch is a panel with the words "District School". Wooden steps at rear doors have rotted away.
6. Chimneys: A single brick chimney served two stoves and a later central heating furnace. A Chimney cap was formed of projecting brick courses. An ornamental iron brace connects the chimney to the roof.
7. Openings: Except for the tower entrance, door and window openings are ornamented with a segmental arched head with three courses of dark brick; a soldier course, a soldier course with sawtooth profile and a projecting header course. There is a bracket of dark brick on each side of the arch. Each window and door has a single-light glass transom under an ornamented wood piece which fills the arch. Windows are two-over-two and doors have four panels. Doors and windows have wood sills.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Hip roof with wood shingles.
 - b. Eaves: Are ornamented with simple modillions.
 - c. Tower: The square bell tower has round arched openings at the front and on each side with brickwork like that at the entrance below. Below the front arch dark brick outlines a panel with the construction date, 1898. The tower is roofed with stamped metal shingles. The curve of the hip roof is convex at the top, concave at the bottom. A flagpole is attached at the front of the north wall.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The entrance opens into a wide, shallow vestibule and cloak room. Doors at each end of the long wall open into a single, large room symmetrically divided by a short partition at the front and the V-shaped projection of the chimney walls at the rear. Exit doors are in the rear wall at opposite ends of the room. Centered on the rear wall is a projecting wing built about 1930 and containing rest rooms above a basement fuel and furnace room.
2. Flooring: New wood flooring was laid about 1937, just before the school was closed.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls are painted plaster. Above painted matchboard wainscots, a ceiling of fiberboard panels on light wood framing was installed about 1937. Much of it is now on the floor.
4. Doorways and doors: Interior doors are identical in design with exterior doors.
5. Lighting, type of fixtures: None remain.
6. Heating: Two stoves were replaced by central heating at the time the rear addition was built.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: The school faces west and is centered in a large, level schoolyard with a few trees in front.
2. Outbuildings: A multi-purpose recreation building is on the site at the north of the school. A school bus garage is to the south. Neither is as old as the school.
3. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: A wire fence on wood posts marks the south and east boundaries of the site.

Prepared by Paul Goeldner, AIA
Supervisory Architect
Utah Project 1967
July 11, 1967

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This record is part of a Utah Survey conducted in the summers of 1967 and 1968 under joint sponsorship of the Historic American Buildings Survey of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service and the Utah Heritage Foundation.

Field work, historic research and record drawings were done under the direction of Project Supervisor Paul Goeldner, AIA, (Texas Tech University) assisted by Project Historian John Giusti, AIA, (University of Utah). Photographs were made by P. Kent Fairbanks of Salt Lake City.

Student Assistant Architects on the 1967 teams were Robert M. Swanson and Charles W. Barrow, (University of Texas) and Kenneth L. Lambert and Keith Sorenson, (University of Utah). 1968 Student Assistant Architects were Keith Sorenson, Charles D. Harker and Robert Schriever, (University of Utah), and Donald G. Prycer (Texas A. & M. University).